and containing only engineering classes, was not of great use to the people at large. He suggested that four technical schools might be opened in the four Divisions of the State in which such useful arts as coir manufacture, weaving and match-box-making might be taught with advantage to students. He also thought that industrial classes might be opened in all vernacular schools throughout the State.

Reply.—It is incorrect to say that the Nagercoil Technical Institute contains only engineering classes. Industrial instruction is also imparted there. In this town itself, there are two other institutions. The weaving class has not been abolished in the local School of Arts, the teacher thereof having been only temporarily sent to the Central Prison for teaching weaving to the prisoners there. Due consideration will be given to the suggestions now made by the members and whatever is possible will be done.

VIII. Religious and charitable institutions.

179. Separation of Devaswom and Revenue departments and adequate representation of Native Christians in the public service.

Mr. R. Narayana Pillai (Ettumanur) represented that at present the Tahsildars had no time even to think about the mismanagement of Devaswoms and much less to remedy it. Many useful reforms in Devaswom administration might be undertaken, but any step in that direction required special attention and without a separate department for the management of Devaswoms it was impossible to achieve anything important.

Mr. C. P. Thomas B. A., L. T., (Travancore and Cochin Christian Association, Kottayam) said that the representation of Indian Christians in the service of the State was inadequate to their number and educational status. He quoted facts and figures in support of this statement and mentioned that only one in 20,000 Christians was in receipt of a pay of Rs. 100 or above. Only in the Medical department where specific professional qualifications were essential and perhaps in one or two others also were their claims not absolutely overlooked. Considering how the members of this community had in several instances distinguished themselves as educationists outside the State and how they had been always in the forefront of voluntary educational activity in the State itself, it was, to say the least, very remarkable that even in the educational department the number of Christians hitherto employed was

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extremely small. If one compared the number of Travancore Christians and members of other communities who had been obliged to seek and able to secure high and responsible posts in the service of other Governments, one could hardly fail to see that serious hindrances did exist in this State to the entertainment of Christians in offices suited to their qualifications. Another fact that had a significant bearing on the question was that in the whole history of the public service in the State there had been only two instances of a Native Christian being placed at the head of any one of the different departments of administration. Coming to the Revenue department, it was notorious how the Christians were excluded even in theory from the higher grades of the service while in practice they were all but excluded even from the lower grades. It might be alleged that they could not be appointed as Tahsildars in view of the fact that these officers had to manage the affairs of Hindu temples, but he had to submit that this argument was not tenable in the least. The Tahsildar had to see that the temple properties were well-managed. What was there in it that a Christian could not do? Again, he had to see that the daily ceremonies and the periodical festivals of these temples were well conducted. The Deputy Tahsildar and the other subordinate officials could be and were made to do almost the whole of the actual work that had to be done at the spot, and what the Tahsildar was chiefly expected to see was that the proper quantity and quality of provisions were supplied and that there was no misappropriation or waste of the same. What again was there in this that a Christian could not do and do as satisfactorily as the most orthodox Brahmin? He did not wish to put forward all these arguments merely in theory. It was well known that there had been a time when Christians were appointed as Tahsildars and when their duties were identically the same as now. That was an age when people were much less liberal and enlightened in their views than now and could any record be produced to show that the practice was given up because the Christians were found unequal to those functions? Above all, in Cochin which was as much if not more powerful a stronghold of orthodox Hinduism as Travancore, 2 out of the 7 Tahsildars were Christians, while a third had been acting in that capacity for some time and it was a well-known fact that these Christian Tahsildars had given complete satisfaction at once to the Hindu population of even places like Trichur as well as to the Hindu

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sovereigns of the State. How an arrangement which was found to be exceedingly successful in Cochin could not be so in Travancore was more than he could answer. The member then passed on to say that he wished to emphasize on the desirability of separating the Devaswom from the Revenue department. Such a separation, he thought, would undoubtedly be conducive to the more efficient and satisfactory performance of the duties connected with each. The inconvenience which the public had to suffer owing to the temporary suspension of the revenue and magisterial duties of a Tahsildar or to the migrations of his office on account of some festival in a Sirkar temple was an evil that might well be remedied, while the financial loss incurred year after year on account of the inadequate supervision of temples had become unmistakably notable. It could scarcely be disputed that any additional cost to Government consequent upon the separation of these two departments could be more than met by the increased prosperity of the temple finances resulting from their better management. The unquestioned equality of the Christian community with any other in this State in point of intellectual capacity, moral character, and loyalty to the throne as well as contribution to the treasury, must naturally make their grievance above referred to all the more keenly felt. It could not be urged that an equitable distribution of State patronage by appointing a large number of Christians in the public service in general and removing their disability in connection with the Revenue department would lead to any popular discontent or that a Christian officer was ever less respected and trusted by the people than a non-Christian one. If the Government could soon find their way to follow in the wake of other enlightened countries and introduce some system of competitive examinations conducted on such lines as would guarantee perfect public confidence for recruiting the higher grades of the public service, it would surely remove much ground for complaint. He concluded with a prayer that Government might be pleased to make a definite pronouncement on the subject as representations made to successive Dewans hitherto had proved futile and it was felt that a rather evasive policy of vagueness and indecision was being all along pursued by the authorities in this matter.

Mr. Warkey John (*Travancore and Cochin Roman Catholic Association, Kottayam*) also spoke on the separation of the Devaswom and Revenue departments and represented that as the Roman

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Catholic Christians were a rather backward community in the matter of higher education, special encouragement should be given to them in the public service.

Mr. G. Idichandy, B. A., Bar-at-Law (Mavelikara) remarked that the combination of revenue and Devaswom duties in one and the same officer was indefensible in principle and injurious in operation and prayed for the early separation of the departments and the appointment of a commissioner in sole charge of Devaswoms.

Mr. K. G.Sesha Iyer B. A., B. L., (Central Association, Trivandrum) said that he had nothing to add to the very forcible remarks already made.

Reply.—There is no use in attacking the constitution of a State, without trying to understand its character, here, there and everywhere. No constitution in the world will bear such a scrutiny. The subjects of a State should take its constitution as they find it. It is, of course, open to them to make suggestions in the way of improvement and, so long as these do not transgress the fundamental rules of the constitution, they are entitled to be duly considered. The separation of Devaswoms is neither desirable in principle nor feasible in the circumstances of the State. Any reform that is proposed must be consistent with the essential features of the constitution under which the Sovereign administers this State as the agent of the Deity. He is bound to maintain the same on Hindu principles. Who that has studied the history of Travancore does not know and realize the full significance of the great act of State policy adopted by Maharajah Martanda Varma, by which he made a gift of the whole State to the Deity after pouring water in a manner to which tradition attaches efficacy and styled himself as Sri Padmanabha Dasa or the servant and agent of that Deity. That being so, it is impossible for the Sovereign of this State to divest himself of Devaswom management. Devaswoms are part and parcel of the State, and it is not possible with the present growing demands upon the finances of the State to constitute a separate department for the administration of Devaswoms which have appertained to the Revenue department from time immemorial. From tradition, prestige and authority, the Revenue department seems to be the best fitted to manage them.

As regards the claims of Christians to appointments in the Revenue

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department, it is observed that only 39 out of 950 appointments in the entire public service on Rs. 30 and above are now not open to them, *viz.*, those of the 31 Tahsildars, the 4 Division Assistants and the 4 Dewan Peishkars. This can hardly be looked upon as a hardship in view of the fundamental revolution which the proposed admission will work in the historic and solemnly pledged constitution of this State. As regards inadequacy of representation, I am prepared to take on trust the figures Mr. Thomas has given. Still, if such statistics are to be correctly gauged, we must also take note of the proportion of educated men in the particular community. However, as I mentioned incidentally in another connection, you may take it that Government appoint persons in the service not in reference to their caste, creed or colour, but solely on the ground of merit. As elsewhere, in this State also, we cannot altogether exclude a particular class merely because it happens to be the foremost in education or generally exempt another because it happens to be backward in that respect. If a community is thought to be not sufficiently represented in service, the remedy for it seems to lie in the members of that community themselves making greater advance in education and general qualifications. However, I may add that, other things being equal, preference will be given to such as deserve special encouragement. That is to say, if there are two graduate applicants, one a Brahmin and the other a Christian, other things being equal, I should give the appointment to the Christian in preference to the Brahmin. This community may rest assured that wherever possible, Government will not hesitate to give due consideration to their claims and qualifications.

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180. Desirability of paying better attention to the working of Devaswoms.

Mr. Kanakku Mathevan Mathevan (*Nedumangad*) said that pujas were not regularly and punctually performed in Sirkar temples and that many of them were in utter disrepair. He prayed that more attention might be devoted by Government to this important matter.

Mr. K. Appathura Iyer B. A., B. L., (*Neumangad*) *and Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai* (*Tovala*) spoke in support of the same view.

Mr. R. Narayana Pillai (*Ettumanur*) suggested that a few respectable gentlemen residing in the neighbourhood might be associated with the management of every important Sirkar Devaswom.